Corporate Workplace Violence: What are current responses?

THE UNIVERSITY OF IOWA
!PRC INJURY PREVENTION RESEARCH CENTER

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In 2014, the Association for Threat Assessment Professionals (ATAP) formed a working group to describe current workplace violence prevention (WVP) and response practices of corporate American companies. The group administered a survey to 77 companies (mostly ATAP members) about their policies and programs. The number of employees in these companies ranged from 50—400,000 (average nearly 52,000). Most of the companies had international locations and represented industries such as manufacturing, finance and insurance, information technology, retail and media/communications.

Key Findings:

WPV Policies: Most companies (90%) had WVP policies in place and used external resources (e.g. psychologists), and most (89%) evaluated the effectiveness of their programs. Nearly all of the companies maintained metrics on workplace violence.

WVP Resources: About 70% of the companies used the Workplace Violence Standard published by the American Society for Industrial Security and Society for Human Resource Management to develop and maintain their WPV program, and 63% used ATAP resources. Most companies (more than 90%) used WPV teams along with external consultants (e.g. psychologists). Most companies (70%) also used threat assessment tools; however only 1/3 used tools that were published and validated.

WVP Training: Most WVP teams were trained on topics recommended by industry standards (e.g. incident resolution, violence risk screening and intervention techniques). Most WVP teams (70%) received training at least annually and most companies (75%) provided WVP training to all security personnel. However, only 58% of the companies offered such training to all human resources personnel, 57% to supervisors /managers, and 41% to employees at-large. Less than half trained these groups at least annually, and less than 25% trained them at the time of hire.

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Smaller Companies (less than 5,000 employees) evaluated their WPV programs less often, trained their WPV teams on less topics, and used fewer external resources than larger companies.

What types of violence are companies investigating?

The most frequent types of events investigated included communicated threats (reported by 55% of respondents), abnormal behavior (reported by 48% of respondents) and bullying (reported by 33% of respondents). Abnormal behavior was more often reported by respondents from smaller companies, while communicated threats and domestic violence were more often reported by respondents from larger companies.

How can this data be used?

Company WPV teams can use the survey results to benchmark, identify gaps and advocate for a WPV program.

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